

1 AN ACT relating to general principles of justification.

2 *Be it enacted by the General Assembly of the Commonwealth of Kentucky:*

3 ➔SECTION 1. A NEW SECTION OF KRS CHAPTER 503 IS CREATED TO  
4 READ AS FOLLOWS:

5 *A person who is engaged in lawful activity and is attacked in any place where he or she*  
6 *has a right to be has no duty to retreat and may meet physical force with force,*  
7 *including deadly force, if he or she reasonably believes it is necessary to do so to*  
8 *prevent death or serious physical injury to himself or herself or another, or to prevent*  
9 *the commission of a felony involving the use of force.*

10 ➔Section 2. KRS 503.050 is amended to read as follows:

11 (1) The use of physical force by a defendant upon another person is justifiable when the  
12 defendant *reasonably* believes that such force is necessary to protect himself *or*  
13 *herself* against the use or imminent use of unlawful physical force by the other  
14 person.

15 (2) The use of deadly physical force by a defendant upon another person is justifiable  
16 ~~under subsection (1)~~ only when the defendant *reasonably* believes that such force  
17 is necessary to protect himself *or herself* against death, serious physical injury,  
18 kidnapping, sexual intercourse compelled by force or threat, *or* felony involving the  
19 use of force~~, or under those circumstances permitted pursuant to KRS 503.055~~.

20 (3) Any evidence presented by the defendant to establish the existence of a prior act or  
21 acts of domestic violence and abuse as defined in KRS 403.720 by the person  
22 against whom the defendant is charged with employing physical force shall be  
23 admissible under this section.

24 ~~[(4) A person does not have a duty to retreat prior to the use of deadly physical force.]~~

25 ➔Section 3. KRS 503.055 is amended to read as follows:

26 (1) A person is presumed to have held a reasonable *belief*~~[*fear*]~~ of imminent peril of  
27 death or *serious physical injury*~~[*great bodily harm*]~~ to himself or herself or another

1 when using defensive force that is intended or likely to cause death or serious  
2 physical injury~~[great bodily harm]~~ to another if:

- 3 (a) The person against whom the defensive force was used was in the process of  
4 unlawfully and forcibly entering or had unlawfully and forcibly entered a  
5 dwelling, residence, or occupied vehicle, or if that person had removed or was  
6 attempting to remove another against that person's will from the dwelling,  
7 residence, or occupied vehicle; and
- 8 (b) The person who uses defensive force knew or had reason to believe that an  
9 unlawful and forcible entry or unlawful and forcible act was occurring or had  
10 occurred.
- 11 (2) The presumption set forth in subsection (1) of this section does not apply if:
- 12 (a) The person against whom the defensive force is used has the right to be in or  
13 is a lawful resident of the dwelling, residence, or vehicle, such as an owner,  
14 lessee, or titleholder, and there is not an injunction for protection from  
15 domestic violence or a written pretrial supervision order of no contact against  
16 that person;
- 17 (b) The person sought to be removed is a child or grandchild, or is otherwise in  
18 the lawful custody or under the lawful guardianship of the person against  
19 whom the defensive force is used;
- 20 (c) The person who uses defensive force is engaged in an unlawful activity or is  
21 using the dwelling, residence, or occupied vehicle to further an unlawful  
22 activity; or
- 23 (d) The person against whom the defensive force is used is a peace officer, as  
24 defined in KRS 446.010, who enters or attempts to enter a dwelling,  
25 residence, or vehicle in the performance of his or her official duties, and the  
26 officer identified himself or herself in accordance with any applicable law or  
27 the person using force knew or reasonably should have known that the person

1 entering or attempting to enter was a peace officer.

2 (3) ~~{A person who is not engaged in an unlawful activity and who is attacked in any~~  
 3 ~~other place where he or she has a right to be has no duty to retreat and has the right~~  
 4 ~~to stand his or her ground and meet force with force, including deadly force, if he or~~  
 5 ~~she reasonably believes it is necessary to do so to prevent death or great bodily harm~~  
 6 ~~to himself or herself or another or to prevent the commission of a felony involving~~  
 7 ~~the use of force.~~

8 ~~(4)~~—A person who unlawfully and by force enters or attempts to enter a person's  
 9 dwelling, residence, or occupied vehicle is presumed to be doing so with the intent  
 10 to commit an unlawful act involving force or violence.

11 ➔Section 4. KRS 503.060 is amended to read as follows:

12 Notwithstanding the provisions of this chapter~~[KRS 503.050]~~, the use of physical force  
 13 by a defendant upon another person is not justifiable when:

14 (1) The defendant is resisting an arrest by a peace officer, recognized to be acting under  
 15 color of official authority and using no more force than reasonably necessary to  
 16 effect the arrest, although the arrest is unlawful; or

17 (2) The defendant, with the intention of causing death or serious physical injury to the  
 18 other person, provokes the use of physical force by such other person; or

19 (3) The defendant was the initial aggressor, except that his or her use of physical force  
 20 upon the other person under this circumstance is justifiable when ~~{~~:

21 ~~(a)—His initial physical force was nondeadly and the force returned by the other is~~  
 22 ~~such that he believes himself to be in imminent danger of death or serious~~  
 23 ~~physical injury; or~~

24 ~~(b)—~~he or she withdraws from the encounter and effectively communicates to the  
 25 other person his or her intent to do so and the latter nevertheless continues or  
 26 threatens the use of unlawful physical force.

27 ➔Section 5. KRS 503.070 is amended to read as follows:

- 1 (1) The use of physical force by a defendant upon another person is justifiable when:
- 2 (a) The defendant **reasonably** believes that such force is necessary to protect a
- 3 third person against the use or imminent use of unlawful physical force by the
- 4 other person; and
- 5 (b) Under the circumstances as the defendant **reasonably** believes them to be, the
- 6 person whom he **or she** seeks to protect would himself **or herself** have been
- 7 justified under KRS 503.050 and 503.060 in using such protection.

- 8 (2) The use of deadly physical force by a defendant upon another person is justifiable
- 9 when:
- 10 (a) The defendant **reasonably** believes that such force is necessary to protect a
- 11 third person against imminent death, serious physical injury, kidnapping,
- 12 sexual intercourse compelled by force or threat, or other felony involving the
- 13 use of force, or under those circumstances permitted pursuant to KRS
- 14 503.055; and
- 15 (b) Under the circumstances as they actually exist, the person whom he **or she**
- 16 seeks to protect would himself **or herself** have been justified under KRS
- 17 503.050 and 503.060 in using such protection.

18 ~~[(3) A person does not have a duty to retreat if the person is in a place where he or she~~

19 ~~has a right to be.]~~

20 ➔Section 6. KRS 503.080 is amended to read as follows:

- 21 (1) The use of physical force by a defendant upon another person is justifiable when the
- 22 defendant **reasonably** believes that such force is immediately necessary to prevent:
- 23 (a) The commission of criminal trespass, robbery, burglary, or other felony
- 24 involving the use of force, or under those circumstances permitted pursuant to
- 25 KRS 503.055, in a dwelling, building or upon real property in his **or her**
- 26 possession or in the possession of another person for whose protection he **or**
- 27 **she** acts; or

1 (b) Theft, criminal mischief, or any trespassory taking of tangible, movable  
2 property in his or her possession or in the possession of another person for  
3 whose protection he or she acts.

4 (2) The use of deadly physical force by a defendant upon another person is justifiable  
5 under subsection (1) only when the defendant reasonably believes that the person  
6 against whom such force is used is:

7 (a) Attempting to dispossess him or her of his or her dwelling otherwise than  
8 under a claim of right to its possession; or

9 (b) Committing or attempting to commit a burglary, robbery, or other felony  
10 involving the use of force, or under those circumstances permitted pursuant to  
11 KRS 503.055, of such dwelling; or

12 (c) Committing or attempting to commit arson of a dwelling or other building in  
13 his or her possession.

14 ~~[(3) A person does not have a duty to retreat if the person is in a place where he or she  
15 has a right to be.]~~

16 ➔Section 7. The following KRS section is repealed:

17 503.120 Justification -- General provisions.